

ST. CHARLES SCHOOL BOARD  
BY-LAWS

REVISED NOVEMBER 2015

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REV. TIMOTHY SHEA  
PASTOR

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MRS. CARA BLANCHETTE  
PRINCIPAL

## INTRODUCTION

St. Charles School is an expression of the educational mission of St. Charles parish with which it is associated, and the Archdiocese of Boston. The pastor is responsible for the administration of the total parish including the school. The principal functions as chief administrator of the school and is a member of the parish staff.

Just as the parish council serves the pastor on behalf of the total parish community, so the parish school board serves the pastor and principal for the good of the school community. The St. Charles School board is committed to St. Charles School and is willing to work for the good of the school and parish as one united community.

## ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this body shall be the St. Charles School Board (hereinafter referred to as the “board”).

## ARTICLE II – PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS

The board was established by the pastor as a consultative entity, in accordance with diocesan policy, to assist him and the principal in the governance of the parish school, and to provide the parents / guardians of the students with a voice in their children’s education. When the board meets, the pastor, principal, and members agree to comply with all diocesan policy. The board is consultative in the following sense: the members cannot act apart from the pastor or principal and cannot make decisions binding for the parish school without the approval of the pastor and principal. Absent express authorization by the pastor and/or principal, no individual board member has the authority to direct, influence, restrict, interfere with, or commandeer resources of the school.

Consultation implies that the administrators will listen to the advice of the board in certain designated matters prior to a decision being reached. The operating principle is that the administration will not act contrary to the advice given, especially when there is consensus, unless the administrators have an overriding reason. It will be customary for the administrators to communicate this reason to the board. Further, the decisions jointly made by the pastor and principal are effective and binding on all.

Consultation (cf. Canons 495-501) also means that decisions will not be made in major matters until and unless the board has been consulted. The areas in which the board has responsibility and will be consulted include but are not limited to:

- Strategic Planning
- Committee Work
- Policy formulation and implementation
- Financial planning, including budgeting and fiscal policy development
- Public Relations
- School Programming and Operations

## ARTICLE III – GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Parish Pastoral Council**

The board and parish council are both consultative to the pastor. Therefore, it is essential that good communication exist between the groups. The relationship which exists is one of information sharing and common planning for the benefit of the total parish community. A member of the school board will be appointed to the parish pastoral council.

### **Parish Finance Council**

A member of the board will meet with the parish finance council as necessary to determine the parish contribution to the school budget. The board finance committee will present an annual budget to the parish finance council for approval.

### **Parent Organization**

The president of the Parents and Teachers Together (“PTT”) shall be an ex-officio member of the board.

### **Diocese**

Diocesan education policies are found in the Archdiocesan Policy Book for The Catholic Schools which is available for local school board members. All local policy must be in compliance with the archdiocesan policy.

## ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the parish school board will be nine members in addition to the pastor or his representative, principal or his/her representative, and president of the PTT. The faculty of St. Charles School will elect annually two non-voting representatives. Faculty representatives will be excluded from all deliberations concerning staff, teachers’ contracts, and related salary issues.

Three of the nine voting members to the board will be appointed by the pastor. Five of the remaining six positions will be filled by parents of students currently attending the school. The ninth member should be, if at all possible, a representative from the public school system to give an objective view from outside of the Catholic School system.

Paid employees of the school or parish may be voting members of the board. However, they may not vote in matters pertaining to finance.

In the spirit of the school’s mission, members serve on the board without compensation. Members ordinarily serve a two-year term which may be renewed every two years at the discretion of the pastor and principal. The pastor or his representative, the principal or his/her representative, and the current president of the PTT, are ex-officio members. Ex-officio members are usually non-voting members, except in the event of a deadlock, at which time the principal shall vote.

## ARTICLE V – SELECTION AND ELIGIBILITY

The following criteria will be used in selecting members for the board:

The candidate will have interest and commitment to the continued preservation of St. Charles School as both an elementary and middle school.

The candidate will have an interest in and commitment to Catholic education and to this school's philosophy and mission.

The candidate will have availability to attend meetings and periodic in-service programs and to participate in committee work.

The candidate will maintain a high level of integrity and confidentiality.

The candidate will act in accordance with and make decisions for the good of the entire school community.

The candidate will be a credible witness to his/her faith for the school community and beyond.

### **Elections and Appointments:**

Nominations to the board will be made in the first month after a vacancy exists. The principal will solicit applications and eligible parishioners and parents may nominate members to fill board positions. Upon receipt of applications the board will vote on membership at the next regularly scheduled meeting during an executive session.

Positions should be filled according to the specific needs of the board. Appointments by the pastor should be made as needed.

Each member is to sign a confidentiality agreement before beginning service on the board.

Members who miss two consecutive board meetings and are unexcused may lose membership. The pastor or his designee will contact the member prior to the next meeting and determine whether or not a vacancy exists on the board. The board may appoint someone to complete the term of a voting member until a replacement is selected.

## ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

In June, the membership committee should present to the board nominees for the positions of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. The officers are elected by the board and serve one-year renewable terms.

The Chairperson will preside at all regular and special meetings of the school board. The Chairperson, with the principal, will determine the agenda, assign duties, and call additional meetings as necessary.

The Vice-Chairperson will assume the position of Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence or at his/her request.

The Secretary will maintain a written record of all acts of the board. He/She will compile and distribute minutes of the meetings and supply the date of future meetings. The Secretary will make the minutes of the past meeting available to the board members at the beginning of the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

The signed and approved meeting minutes will be turned in by the Secretary to the school office forthwith following each meeting.

## ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

All regular meetings of the board shall be open to all interested parties and notice of all regular meetings shall be posted on the school calendar. If a special meeting is called, it shall be communicated to the school community to the extent it is feasible to do so, provided that a deficiency in communicating notice thereof shall not invalidate any business transacted.

Issues relevant to the purpose and function of the school board may include but are not limited to:

Issues where the board has responsibility for consultation, which shall include those areas delineated in Article II. Without limiting the generality of those areas delineated in Article II, this includes issues related to the safety of the whole student body, as well as issues related to curriculum improvements and updates, in comparison with area schools and guided by Archdiocesan standards and suggestions.

Issues relating to individual students or individual staff members are not matters that are properly presented to the school board for discussion or decision. This restriction is to protect the privacy and other rights of the students and staff members, to protect the school in legal affairs, and to comport with the board's consultative role.

The rule of parliamentary procedure shall govern meetings of the board.

The full board will meet a minimum of five times each year, beginning in September and ending in June. Standing committees meet as needed.

Special board meetings can be called by the pastor, principal and chairperson in consultation with the pastor and the principal. Special board meetings are also open to non-members, provided the meeting consists of more than an executive session.

The board will go into executive session whenever the issues involve confidential matters. In the event the board is discussing any matter pertaining to an individual student or staff member, it SHALL only do so while in executive session.

Quorum:

A majority of the full voting membership of the board shall constitute a quorum. Unless otherwise provided, when a vote is taken upon any measure before the board, a quorum being present, a simple majority of the members voting on the measure shall determine the outcome thereof.

Since the Pastor, or Co-pastors, under the Bishop, is (are) personally responsible for the administration of the parish (under Canon Law), the vote of the board, on Policy decisions, is subject to the Pastor's approval. The Pastor shall communicate to the board the reasons for non-approval.

#### ARTICLE VIII – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The members of the executive committee are the pastor, principal, chairperson, and vice-chairperson. The executive committee should meet as needed. The agenda and written committee reports should be made available to members at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

#### ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES AND GROUP REPORTS

Committees of the board shall include, as needed:

- Finance Committee
- Advancement / Fundraising Committee
- Strategic Planning Committees, including:
  - o Service Committee
  - o After School Program Committee
  - o Database Committee
  - o Communications Committee

Committees shall stand and recess as needed, and additional committees may be formed from time to time. Committees also may be absorbed into each other as necessary or beneficial.

## ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended by a 2/3 majority of the voting board.

Mandatory review of board by-laws must occur every three years.

## ARTICLE XI – RULES OF ORDER

In order to provide the best consultation, the consensus method of decision making should be used. When the board is unable to reach a consensus, the minutes should report the different positions and appropriate reasons.

When the pastor is present at the meeting and concurs with the decision reached, he signs the board minutes, and his concurrence and the decision may be implemented.

When the pastor is unable to attend a board meeting, he should receive the minutes being distributed. His signature on the minutes constitutes concurrence. The minutes are then circulated and decisions may be implemented.

Adopted: 1983

Revised: November 3, 2015

## **Saint Charles School Board Confidentiality Agreement**

As a member of the Saint Charles School Board (“Board Member”), I acknowledge that a relationship of confidence and trust exists between all Board Members and Saint Charles School and Saint Charles Parish with respect to information of a confidential or private nature made known to Board Members during the term of their membership.

I further recognize that Board Members obtain and have access to certain information concerning Saint Charles School and its operations, finances, personnel, student body and personal and family issues as well as computer programs, software and supporting documentation, technological and physical plant improvement plans, strategic plans, and financial and employee information, all of which is collectively referred to as “Confidential Information” that the Saint Charles School Board treats and desires to continue to treat on a confidential basis.

I agree that I will not disclose Confidential Information to persons who are not Board Members, and that I will refrain from discussing Confidential Information in public and open areas. I agree to utilize Confidential Information only for the purpose for which it was shared with me, i.e., in furtherance of the performance of my duties as a Board Member and for the benefit of the Saint Charles School. I understand that unauthorized disclosure, copying and/or misuse of Confidential Information is a serious breach of duty and may result in removal from the Saint Charles School Board, and that my obligation to maintain the confidentiality of Confidential Information extends as long as the Confidential Information is not generally known to the public or has not been disclosed by Saint Charles School, even if I am no longer a Board Member.

I agree that in the event I am uncertain as to whether certain information is to be treated as Confidential Information, I will seek the guidance of the School Principal, Chairperson of the School Board and/or the Pastor, and I will not disclose such information until the individuals identified above have been given an opportunity to provide guidance and instruction on the issue.

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Name

Saint Charles School Board

Date: